

**A. FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**Purpose:** This section explains the length of certification periods depending on household circumstances and when it can be changed.

**WAC 388-416-0005 Certification periods for food assistance.**

A certification period is the specified amount of time the assistance unit is determined eligible for food assistance. Assistance units are certified for the following periods:

- (1) Not more than twenty-four months for assistance units without earned income or cash assistance when all members are elderly.
- (2) Not more than twelve months for assistance units with no earned income and all household members are disabled or elderly.
- (3) Not more than six months for assistance units:
  - (a) Receiving cash assistance;
  - (b) With earned income and required to report monthly;
  - (c) With recent work history and required to report monthly; or
  - (d) Not likely to have any changes.
- (2) Not more than three months for assistance units:
  - (a) Consisting of migrant or seasonal farmworkers;
  - (b) Containing an Able-Bodied Without Dependents (ABAWD);
  - (c) Without any income or cash assistance;
  - (d) With expenses that exceed income received;
  - (e) That are homeless or staying in an emergency or battered spouse shelter;
  - (f) That are staying in a non-ADATSA drug and alcohol treatment center; or

(g) Not identified in this section.
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**CLARIFYING INFORMATION**

The certification period begins the month a household is eligible even if the household does not receive benefits the first month because of proration.

**WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. When processing an application after the 15th of the month, extend the certification period by one month if you are assigning a certification period of three months or less.
2. Extend the certification period for monthly reporting households to six months.
3. Shorten a certification period when a change indicates that a client's new circumstances may be unstable
4. Terminate benefits when an AU becomes ineligible during a certification period.